

# Roberta Reyes Cordero, JD

## *Interpersonal to Intercultural Communication*

16 July 2008

*Electronically submitted:*  
*MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov*

**TO:** California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
Attention: Melissa Miller-Henson

**FROM:** Roberta R. Cordero

**RE:** Nomination to the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

Dear Ms. Miller-Henson:

At the request of friends in both the local Santa Barbara community and my Native community, I am submitting this self-nomination to the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group of the California MLPA Initiative.

Because of time spent evacuating from my home caused by the Gap fire and my subsequent and grateful return, I will not have time to follow your suggested format completely. I am asking you to rely on the other documents I am attaching with my email to supplement the brief comments I will provide below. The supplementary documents include my professional résumé, a brief biography, and excerpts from professional recommendation letters. I hope you will find this method acceptable and that you will ask me for any needed additional information by contacting me as soon as possible. Thanks so much.

### ***Statement of Information:***

I am a Santa Barbara native as well as a member of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation. Since returning to my homeland after living away for a number of years, I have been active and sometimes instrumental in bringing about significant Chumash cultural revitalization. For instance, as a co-founder of Chumash Maritime Association, I have been a consistent contributor to activities surrounding the reintroduction of our traditional indigenous maritime culture, especially including our redwood plank canoe, the tomol *Elye'wun*.

Along with and because of this, I have also involved myself in critical maritime environmental issues and activities. For instance, for three years I was an Alternate Public-at-Large member of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) and, while there, helped to institute the Chumash Seat for SAC. I have also participated in other community-wide stakeholder activities—listed in my résumé—and continue to be active in the Chumash and other Native community concerning cultural resources and the protection of sacred sites. Please see my supplementary materials for a more complete description.

The organizations and individuals with which I would principally communicate are Chumash Maritime Association, SAC Chumash Seat & Alternate, Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, Barbareño Chumash Council, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, Northern Chumash Tribal Council, Bakersfield Chumash Council, other Chumash groups and individuals, as well as the hundreds of Tongva, Acjachemem, Tataviam, and other Southern California Native people with whom I have regular contact through our existing networks. As well, I have regular contact with many people and organizations from the general population with whom I personally and communally collaborate in environmental concerns of mutual interest, especially in the Santa Barbara area. Communication and outreach would be done principally by email and in person, focusing on the regular gatherings of the above organizations.

The special expertise I would bring is process expertise focusing on inclusiveness (please see my supplementary documents) along with my deep, deep love for every aspect and creature of this place. Participating in the Stakeholder Group would be an effective and meaningful expression of the commitment I already have and, I believe, would benefit the group, the process and the outcome.

Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,  
Roberta R. Cordero

Attachments (3)

**Roberta Reyes Cordero** (Chumash/Yaqui/Mestiza) was born and raised in Santa Barbara. She lived in Seattle for 35 years where she raised her five children. She has seven grandchildren living in Washington and California. Ms. Cordero is a 1985 graduate of University of Washington School of Music with professional degrees in Music and Voice and of University of Washington School of Law in 1989. She briefly practiced family law, and also worked as assistant ombudsman for King County government, among other employments. She has been a professional peacemaker since 1987, specializing in cross-cultural, large group, and family mediation. Working nationwide, Ms. Cordero is a conflict management consultant, trainer, and coach for conflict management, interpersonal to intercultural communication, negotiation, mediation and facilitation working with Federal agencies and tribal entities alike. In 1995/6 with a small group of local Chumash people, she co-founded the Chumash Maritime Association (CMA), a non-profit group seeking to revitalize indigenous maritime heritage. A past member of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary's Advisory Council, she remains active in environmental and land use issues impacting her Chumash homeland. Ms. Cordero is a member of Association for Conflict Resolution and of the Native Network of US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.

**Roberta Reyes Cordero, JD**  
***Interpersonal to Intercultural Communication***

**Conflict Management and Training Consultant for:**

- ◆ Local government, educational, environmental, grass roots & non-profit agencies
- ◆ Formerly, Indian Dispute Resolution Services, Sacramento CA (Master Trainer)
- ◆ Various California Tribes & Tribal Organizations, including OVCD – TANF
- ◆ State of California, including Dept. of Toxics
- ◆ Federal Government Agencies, including EPA, NOAA, DOD, DOI & BIA

**Qualifications:**

- ◆ 23 years professional dispute resolution experience
- ◆ 250 hours Mediation/Facilitation & Related Training
- ◆ 20 years trainer: conflict management, negotiation, mediation, other
- ◆ Juris Doctor

***Expertise***

- Conflict analysis and process management
- Small and large group facilitation and mediation
- Interest-based negotiation and consensus building
- Training
- Program and policy analysis
- Team-building and inter-agency collaboration
- Community organizing
- Organizational conflict management
- Workplace cultural change

***Experience Summary***

**Conflict analysis and process management.** Ms. Cordero's legal and mediation training and experience together form the basis of these skills. Applied to family law, these skills supported the legal analysis, extensive research and complex management of time and legal procedures necessary for effective advocacy in and out of the courtroom. Legal caseload included divorce, child support, custody, adoption and research of family, jurisdiction, confidentiality, zoning and other legal issues. In the practice of mediation and facilitation, Ms. Cordero's deep listening skills assist disputants in understanding their interests and hopes in order to determine the appropriate venue for conflict resolution. In the context of mediating or facilitating, the ability to exercise ongoing analysis and evaluation of the evolving conflict supports the disputants in using the process to full advantage and successful completion. In other experience requiring strong conflict analysis and process management skills, Ms. Cordero's experience as an assistant ombudsman included the investigation of citizen complaints concerning the operation of King County, WA, government. Issues ranged from the application of environmental rules and regulations, building permit applications, code enforcement violations, drainage issue violations and workplace disputes to the violation of the County's Ethics Code by a prominent elected official. In each case, the process culminated in the formulation of recommendations for policy and procedure changes designed to improve the operation of County government. More recently, during several years of consultation with NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program, Ms. Cordero worked in depth with the staff members of each of ten Sanctuary sites around the country providing conflict management and other training, conflict

analysis, dispute resolution, workplace collaboration and culture change, and internal workplace conflict management protocols.

**Small and large group facilitation.** In a 32-hour Cross-Cultural and Large Group Mediation and Facilitation training, Ms. Cordero learned the basics of facilitating the resolution of multi-party disputes. These include convening team-building constituent meetings as well as all-party meetings, the development of mutually acceptable ground rules, and the support and development of the parties' ability to understand, advocate, and negotiate for their own interests. Experience in facilitating multi-party disputes has been primarily for neighborhood disputes and workplace disputes. Other facilitation experience includes policy development and planning meetings for such groups as non-profit agencies including a rape crisis center, a local community arts group, a coalition of organic farming interests, and local governmental agencies including the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission and the Santa Barbara County Diversity Steering Committee. Similar facilitation was a regular feature of the work as an assistant ombudsman as well. In Santa Barbara, Ms. Cordero frequently facilitates dispute resolution and collaboration between and among local grass-roots organizations. Recently, Ms. Cordero served as a Native American consultant and co-facilitator for the Topock Summit meetings for California's Department of Toxic Substance Control, assisting the participation of tribal leaders.

**Interest-based negotiation and consensus building.** Ms. Cordero's position as chair and co-coordinator of Chumash Maritime Association (CMA) provides ongoing negotiation and consensus-building experience. CMA is a non-profit formed in 1996 to revitalize Chumash maritime heritage. In her dual role, Ms. Cordero facilitates Board meetings as well as activities. In addition, she has been lead negotiator between CMA and non-Indian entities in the community, such as in obtaining a memorandum of agreement from the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum governing the work of developing and maintaining CMA's culturally relevant exhibit there. In a similar situation, she led the negotiation of CMA's participation as a cultural presence at the new Watershed Resource Center, a collaboration of grassroots environmental interests educating the public to sustainable rehabilitation and care of the watershed. Earlier, as a Board member of Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Ms. Cordero led the Women of Color Caucus in a consensus building process within the Coalition. More recently, she has been a stakeholder participant working for consensus in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary's Advisory Council, Common Ground—Gaviota Coast Discussion Group, and Arroyo Burro Watershed Discussion Group.

**Training.** Ms. Cordero has been a trainer in diverse venues beginning as a professional musician training individual students and small groups in vocal technique. Later, she formulated and delivered several trainings regarding domestic violence issues including a continuing legal education session for family law attorneys, an agency-wide training for the Seattle Indian Health Board which included confidentiality and reporting requirements, and several in-service trainings for law enforcement and judicial entities and 911 operators. As the intake coordinator of a multi-agency family services collaborative, Ms. Cordero formulated and delivered a full-day training for line staff regarding release of confidentiality and coordination of services. Most recently, she has been a trainer for skills-based trainings for diverse entities such as Community Mediation Program, Indian Dispute Resolution Services, Environmental Protection Agency, National Marine Sanctuaries, Antioch University, Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara County Human Relations Commission, American Indian Student Association at University of California Santa Barbara, Chumash Scholars Program at UCSB, and Associated Students at UCSB. Conflict management training areas are communication skill-building, interest-based negotiation, beginning and advanced mediation, facilitation and other large-group processes, intercultural effectiveness, historic trauma, Native American cultural issues, workplace conflict management systems, and EEOC/civil rights law issues training. Currently, Ms. Cordero provides semi-annual intercultural effectiveness training as part of a team consulting to the Department of Defense (American Indian Cross Cultural Communication). She is also the lead

trainer for a series of trainings for Owens Valley Career Development Center (an inter-Tribal agency) to develop a cadre of in-house mediators.

**Program and policy analysis.** Ms. Cordero's legal training and experience as well as her ombuds experience give her solid program and policy analysis skills. Policy analysis is essential to the understanding of law, particularly public interest and family law, two areas in which Ms. Cordero concentrated her study and her efforts. One cannot apply the facts of a given case to the law without a firm understanding of the policies underlying that area of law. In ombuds practice, each investigation goes to the heart of the government's policy in a given area in order to determine whether the program being allegedly violated is operating in harmony with policy. (Please refer to the section, "Conflict Analysis and Process Management", above.) In addition, in the work of service-oriented non-profits—such as those with whom Ms. Cordero has been associated—the very work flows from the mission and policy of the agency. The ability to apply these skills has been of utmost importance in the founding of Chumash Maritime Association as well as for stakeholder participation in local environmental discussion groups and critique of environmental impact reporting on Chumash cultural sites.

**Team-building and inter-agency collaboration.** In the workplace, Ms. Cordero is known for her team-building capabilities among her co-workers. This ability extends to the multi-layered team-building skills necessary for inter-group collaboration. Ms. Cordero has been a successful team-player and collaborator especially in bringing together the Women of Color Caucus of the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, in coordinating services for the multi-agency family services collaboration, in co-founding Chumash Maritime Association, collaborating in the formation of the Watershed Resource Center, and inter-tribal coordination and collaboration.

### ***Employment History***

10/98 – Present	Conflict Management, Mediation and Training Consultant: Local Government, Educational, Environmental, Grass Roots & Non-Profit Agencies Owens Valley Career Development Center/TANF Indian Dispute Resolution Services Environmental Protection Agency California Department of Toxic Substance Control NOAA – National Marine Sanctuaries DOD – American Indian Cross-Cultural Communication Course BIA – Co-Facilitator for Consultation with Tribes
6/97 – 5/03	Coordinator of Community Programs, Community Mediation Program of Santa Barbara County
1/96 – Present	Chumash Maritime Association, California (President/Co-Coordinator, Vice Chair, Board)
4/96 – 5/97	Intake Coordinator, Partnership for Families, Family Service Agency, North Santa Barbara County
11/93 – 10/95	Assistant Ombudsman, King County Office of Citizen Complaints/Ombudsman
1/91 – 10/93	Domestic Violence Victim Advocacy, Research, Training - King County and Washington State
1/91 – 10/95	Cross-Cultural and Family Mediation Practice, Seattle
7/87 – 12/90	Legal – Family & Public Interest Law, Seattle
1977 – 1989	Professional Liturgical Musician, St. Joseph Church, Seattle

### ***Education, Training, Certifications and Awards***

B.A. – University of Washington, Cum Laude, 1984  
B.Music – University of Washington, Cum Laude, 1984  
Phi Beta Kappa, 1984  
Juris Doctor – University of Washington, 1989  
Cross-Cultural and Large Group Mediation/Facilitation Training, Certificate 1988  
Mediation Training, Certificate 1988  
Divorce and Parenting Mediation, Certificate 1990  
Domestic Violence Victim Advocacy Training, 1991  
Anti-Oppression Workshop, 1993  
IDRS Communication, Negotiation, Mediation Trainings, Certificates 1998  
Santa Barbara *Independent* Local Heroes, 1999  
Northern California Mediation Association, Gil Lopez Scholarship Award, 2000  
Family Group Conferencing Training, Alan McRae, Trainer, 2000  
Wishtoyo Foundation, Cultural Preservation Award, 2002  
Models of Healing for Indigenous Survivors of Inter-Generational Trauma, 2003  
Mediating Dangerously, Ken Cloke, Trainer, 2003  
Hate Crime Prevention Workshop, Jody Roy, PhD, Trainer 2003  
Models for Healing Multicultural Survivors of Historical Trauma, 2004

### ***Affiliations***

Chumash Maritime Association, Board President, 1997 to present  
Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, Public-at-Large Alternate, 2000-2003  
Common Ground (Gaviota Coast stakeholder discussion group), Chumash seat, 2002 to 2004  
Conference Co-presenter, Association for Conflict Resolution Conference, Environmental & Public Policy Section, 2002  
Adjunct Faculty, Antioch University of Santa Barbara, 2002 to present  
Arroyo Burro Watershed Visioning Group, member, 2003 to 2004  
Conference Panelist, Association for Conflict Resolution, Environmental & Public Policy Section, May 2004  
Association for Conflict Resolution, Practitioner, 2004 to present  
U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, Native Network, 2004 to present  
Native Network Conference Co-Facilitator and Trainer, August 2005 & August 2006  
Conference Panelist, California Indian Legal Services, California Tribal Courts Conference, April 2007